

Answers to written questions on notice by Swinburne University of Technology, relating to the public hearing in Melbourne on 24 July 2017

Senator Bridget McKenzie

1. Can you please break down your annual reports to a granular level so I can understand your teaching costs per student, including associated teaching expenses and marketing?

Swinburne University supports our students through a range of inextricable investments in teaching which are outlined in our annual report each year.

2. Please provide a detailed summary of the remuneration structure for the Vice-Chancellor of your institutions.

The remuneration package of the Vice-Chancellor is determined by Council, and executive salaries are published in the annual-report.

Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins

1. Can Swinburne clarify its position to fee deregulation in the Pyne packages?

Swinburne opposed the full fee-deregulation of the 2014 Higher Education Reform package on the basis that it would pose a significant inflationary risk for students, and could have led to significant debts for students had the upper limit on HELP loans been removed. Swinburne proposed an amendment to the legislation wherein a maximum cap would be placed on HELP loans, in order to discourage price gouging behaviour and to ensure that students did not incur irresponsible debts.

2. Is Swinburne concerned about attrition-based performance funding, given its large online cohort at Swinburne Online?

Swinburne is concerned that as a university of access and opportunity, we may be unfairly disadvantaged if raw attrition data is used to determine performance based funding. Swinburne therefore recommends that should attrition rates become a criterion by which performance funding is determined, modified attrition data such as that provided recently by the Higher Education Standards Panel ought to be used. This modified data reflects the attrition risk factors of students experiencing educational disadvantage, and places universities on a more equal footing.

3. What is your assessment on the regulatory impact of this bill?

While Swinburne notes the Office of Best Practice Regulation's advice that there would be no significant regulatory impacts from the Bill, the postgraduate scholarship scheme it would establish and performance funding scheme for example may require further scrutiny and examination.

